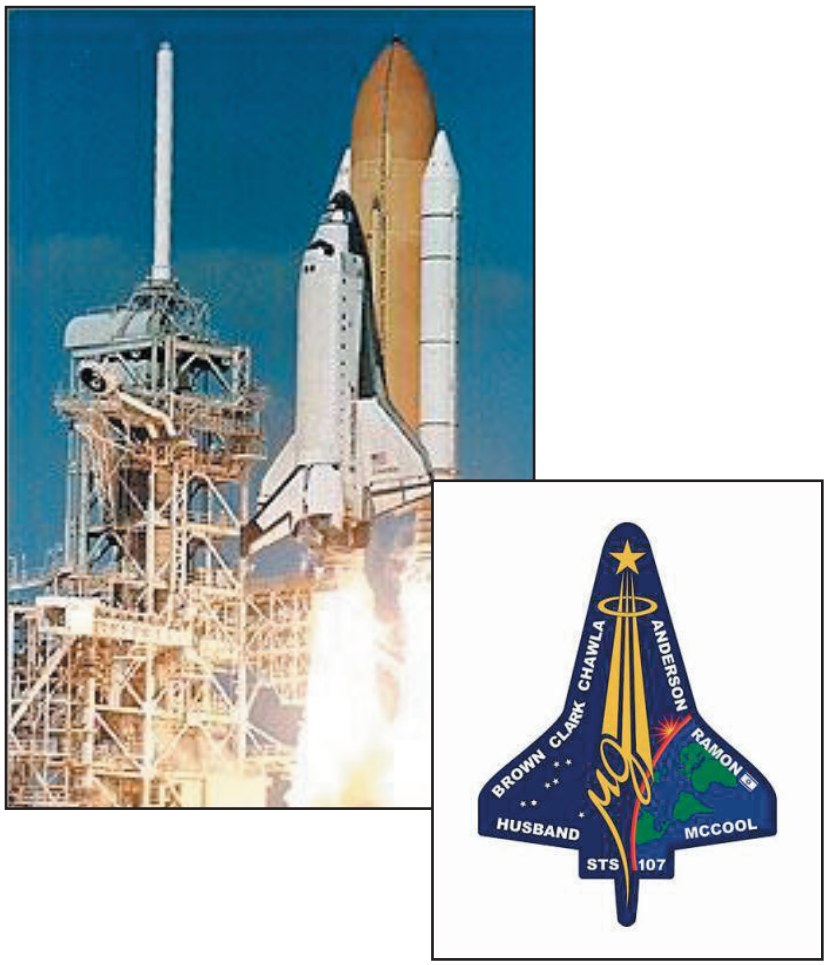
Air Force Research Laboratory|AFRL

Science and Technology for Tomorrow's Air and Space Force

Success Story

AFRL RECOGNIZED IN NASA GROUP ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



AFRL supported the team that developed state-of-the-art aerothermodynamic prediction techniques and models used to reconstruct events leading to the loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia. The team's final report was critical to the Columbia Accident Investigation Board's (CAIB) ultimate findings and recommendations.

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Accomplishment

AFRL participated in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Johnson Aerothermodynamics Team that earned a NASA Group Achievement Award for supporting the CAIB. For almost 2 years, this team worked to create the state-of-the-art aerothermodynamic prediction techniques and environment models needed to reconstruct the Columbia's mission prior to its February 2003 loss. The CAIB used the team's analyses, tests, and evaluations to conclusively identify the accident's cause.

Background

NASA presents the Group Achievement Award to teams contributing to its mission. The NASA Johnson Aerothermodynamics Team facilitated NASA's mission to return the space shuttle to flight following the loss of the Columbia during its reentry on February 1, 2003. The team helped the CAIB determine the cause of the mishap, which resulted from damage occurring during launch when foam fell from the external tank and struck reinforced carbon-carbon panels on the underside of the Columbia's left wing.

Additional Information

To receive more information about this or other activities in the Air Force Research Laboratory, contact TECH CONNECT, AFRL/XPTC, (800) 203-6451 and you will be directed to the appropriate laboratory expert. (05-VA-18)